

1866.]

want him to see us—it is Walter C——, and how he is watching Miss Egan skate,” and with a little sigh, my fair cousin dropped her eyes to the ground.

“Don't be jealous,” I whispered, consolingly; “if he knew you were here, he would be over in a trice.”

“I do not care if he never comes,” she replied, tossing her head. “There is Harry H—— coming over to us.”

The new comer was a tall young fellow of some twenty-three or twenty-four years. He was evidently a favourite with Julia, so, excusing myself to them, I shot over the ice in the direction of young C——. I purposely brushed against him, but, turning, tendered an apology, which was received with a haughty inclination of the head. My first impressions are generally strong ones, and I thought, as I skated away, that he would never do for Julia. He would wound her affectionate little heart fifty times a day. The sunshiny disposition would suit her far better, unless, I could not help adding, an incomparable fellow like myself should step in. I saw no more of young C——, and soon after Julia and I went home.

The next day we received a note of invitation to attend a party given by Mrs. C——, and, added Julia, gleefully, after reading it, “the fascinating Adolph will be there, and you shall point him out to me—that is, if you can—but you men are so slow to acknowledge good looks in your own sex, that I doubt if you will recognize him.”

“Trust me for that,” I retorted. “I have something within me that will sharpen my wits.”

“Have you really? Why, what is it, Charlie? Some new kind of sharpening machine with a patent taken out and secured? Do tell me!”

“No, it is a thing of ancient date, which you have read descriptions of hundreds of times; but I will tell you my opinion of it some other time.”

The evening of the party arrived, and Julia, lovelier than ever, in a blue silk, with white roses in her hair, was placed under my watchful care, and the cab soon put us down at Mrs. C——'s door, No. — C—— street.

We were the last guests to arrive, and shortly after dancing commenced. I had engaged my cousin for the first quadrille, and, as we moved to our places, she murmured, in a low tone—

“Have you found him yet?”

“No,” I replied, “but I feel a presentiment that he is near.”

“A presentiment! Oh, fie, Charlie! with such glorious irradiating, refulgent sunshine near you, throwing its enlivening—”

“Oh, forbear!” I exclaimed, tragically, adding in a jocular tone, “I would rather he was all moonshine.”

I was not long in glancing around me, and in the adjoining set, I beheld my fair cousin's hero. Yes, I would swear to those eyes anywhere, after hearing Julia's description. And they were beautiful, large, radiant, and dark, yet not so dark as to appear black. Eyes generally darken with feeling; brown, blue, and grey frequently appear black, but these gained not a shade of colour, but expanded, and grew more deliciously liquid and tender. I am an ardent admirer of fine eyes, and in the present case, watching and commenting inwardly upon them, I forgot my position in the dance, till I was recalled to my senses by Julia. At the first opportunity she glanced up at me, saying mischievously—

“Eh, Charlie, was I too enthusiastic? It seems that Mr. P—— can captivate a gentleman as well as a lady.”

“Yes, yes—his face is perfect, I admit; handsome face, beautiful eyes, and he knows how to use them, too. That is the secret of his success, *ma chère cousine*; why one would think that he was in love with that young lady—ah! I am afraid he is a sad flirt.”

I had not been looking at Julia as I spoke, but turning now, I saw that the roses had left her cheeks, and the sparkle her eyes. Fortunately the quadrille was almost ended, and hastily leading her to a seat, I left her for a moment to procure some restoratives. When I returned, he was beside her, watching her pale countenance

with intense interest, and speaking in low, sweet tones. Julia raised her drooping eyelids at my approach, and gave me an introduction to Mr. P——. He bowed low, and grasping my hand warmly expressed his pleasure at making my acquaintance, in good language, but with a foreign accent. As he sat down, his glance encountered Julia's, and I could not but observe that the warm colour rushed to cheek and lip, and a sudden light beamed in her soft blue eyes. She thanked me warmly for the restoratives which I had brought, but hardly touched them, and expressed herself quite well again.

“May I, then, have the honour of your hand for the next dance?” said Mr. P——.

Julia bowed her acceptance, and in a few minutes they were gliding away in the graceful waltz, and I turned from contemplating them with a painful feeling which I could not repress. The evening passed over as such evenings generally do, where many are happy, and, I doubt not, many unhappy. The smiling countenance, the ringing laugh, the merry jest, and the gay repartée, are frequently merely masks which hide the aching heart, and veil the many passions which find play beneath the human soul. Would we not be startled if the veil could be torn from the hearts of all, and the feelings dwelling there be exposed to our view? In many, doubtless, we would find tender and devoted affection, and pleasant friendly feelings; but, perhaps, mingled with them, and infusing the bitterest gall through them, jealousy and envy, contempt and dislike, and, perhaps, even remorse—that most harrassing of all passions—has its place there. But, Charlie Burton, you are forgetting yourself—you are not writing either a sermon or an essay, but merely a diary; therefore, while you are giving your sentiments, which nobody cares anything about (nor yourself either, for that matter) an airing, you are wasting the precious hours of sleep, and might far better be in the arms of Morpheus; therefore Mesdames Reflection and Monsieur Diary *au revoir*.

The next morning I said to Julia—

“Well, *ma chère petite*, when am I to see No. 3?”

“Oh, you shall see him soon, do not fear, Charlie; but he is so quiet and retiring, you would never notice him. I shall have to point him out to you, and if you will make one of a party to the Drill Sheds this evening, I will do so.”

“Agreed at once; but who are going?”

“Some of your old friends—the Bruces, Lynds, and perhaps another. It is Battalion Drill to-night, and we will have a pleasant time.”

“Is Mr. P—— a volunteer, Julia?” I enquired shyly.

“No, you tease; but Mr. C—— and Mr. N—— are.”

“Ah! then, I must be on the *qui vive*, and count the stolen glances—eh, cousin?”

“Just as you please,” she returned, smiling.

About half-past seven o'clock that evening, we entered the Drill Sheds, and went up-stairs, where we had seats, and a good position to overlook the whole. Several glances were cast upward by the gallant volunteers, attracted by the fair faces which smiled down upon them.

Julia pointed out the third of the trio to me, a tall, slender young fellow, with a pleasant, thoughtful-looking face.

“The one most to be trusted of the three,” I inwardly thought; “at least, his character is easier read in his face. A sincere and considerate friend he would make—quite a safe one for my little cousin. I must study that young C——'s face more—he has not nearly such an open countenance.”

We left the Drill Sheds in about an hour, and our young friends accompanied us home, and passed the remainder of the evening with us.

Dec. 13th.—This evening we enjoyed the pleasure of a half-lighted room for nearly an hour. The blazing fire shot forth ruddy flames, illuminating, by turns, my aunt, as she sat in her easy chair—a fine looking woman, resting her still fair cheek upon her well-shap'd hand, and gazing meditatively into it—then flashing its coquetish light upon Julia's lovely brown braids

and silken lashes, drooping softly upon her finely tinted cheek, albeit the colour there is not so deep as when I first came to H——; and there are pensive lines about the coral lips, and a faint shadow under the almost transparent eye-lids that might be caused by secret sorrow and repressed tears. Can it be that anything serious troubles my pretty cousin? I love her so well that I could gaze for hours upon her beautiful face.

The conversation grew more and more disconnected, until, at last, silence settled upon us all. Julia was lost in a reverie, and was unconscious of my scrutiny. I argued but little hopeful to myself from her abstraction, I dare not hope that her affection for me is other than that of a sister. But time and circumstances will furnish a solution to my doubts, and for its developments I must wait. About eight o'clock the street-door bell rang, and visitors were ushered in—the two young gentlemen, C—— and N——. Now, I thought, is an opportunity for observation. Young C—— shook hands with all with gentlemanly ease, and then took a seat by an aunt “That looks well,” I thought—“shows respect for the old.” We, the remaining three, entered into a conversation, in which young N—— bore a modest and sensible part. Glancing occasionally at my aunt and her young companion, I saw that he conversed with a gravity beyond his years, and began to wonder if some circumstance in early life had not saddened his mind, and given a more sombre hue to his thoughts and feelings than generally belongs to the young. The smiles of an habitually grave face are most generally very sweet ones, and it is true in this case. Lighted up by smiles and animation, the face is a peculiarly attractive one. There is power in it, and the passions which lie behind it are evidently none of the lightest. Sensitive and ardent even, but secretive to a degree, the most acute mental sufferings could be concealed without a change of feature. Conversing with him afterward, I found that he expresses himself too bluntly sometimes—gives utterance to sentiments without consideration of the effect they may produce upon others—thus wounding the feelings of some, and offending others—a fault which, it is to be hoped, he will overcome; for, with this exception, he is a most pleasant and fascinating companion.

With instrumental music and singing, the evening passed pleasantly away.

Dec. 16th.—I came home from business this evening a little earlier than usual, and, coming down stairs in a loose coat, and slippers, walked into the parlour, no one being in the sitting-room. I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own eyes, but in the dusky light I could see my cousin, kneeling beside the sofa, with her face buried in its cushions, and evidently in the deepest distress.

She had not heard my entrance, and I noiselessly retreated into the other room, where my aunt soon appeared, followed by the servant, with lights.

We were discussing the merits of a concert which we had attended at the M—— Hall, a few evenings before, and my aunt spoke of Mr. P——, who had sat near us.

“He is very handsome,” said my aunt; “and I hear that he is engaged to a very pretty and amiable young lady.”

“Of this city?” I enquired.

“No, some place at a distance; I forget the name.”

“Have you known it long?” I asked, a sudden thought flashing across my mind.

“No, I heard it from Miss C—— this afternoon; and I believe he told her all about it himself.”

Could this have been the cause of Julia's tears? It is a question which I cannot bear to ask myself.

She did not appear at the tea-table, pleading a headache.

I have spent the evening in my room, having had letters to write.

Feb. 12th.—It is two months since I have written any in this diary.

I felt very miserable that evening, December the 16th; I have been very ill since, and am